

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 16, 2012

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 9, 2012

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 138

Introduced by Assembly Member Solorio

(Coauthors: Senators Correa and Lowenthal)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Allen, Ammiano, Atkins, Beall, Bill Berryhill, Block, Blumenfield, Bonilla, Bradford, Brownley, Buchanan, Butler, Charles Calderon, Campos, Carter, Chesbro, Conway, Cook, Dickinson, Eng, Feuer, Fong, Beth Gaines, Galgiani, Garrick, Gatto, Gordon, Grove, Hagman, Halderman, Hall, Harkey, Hayashi, Roger Hernández, Hill, Huber, Hueso, Huffman, Jeffries, Jones, Lara, Bonnie Lowenthal, Ma, Mansoor, Miller, Mitchell, Monning, Morrell, Nestande, Nielsen, Norby, Olsen, Pan, Perea, John A. Pérez, V. Manuel Pérez, Portantino, Silva, Swanson, Torres, Wagner, Wieckowski, and Yamada)

March 22, 2012

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 138—Relative to Vietnamese American history.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 138, as amended, Solorio. Vietnamese American history.

This measure would recognize April 23, 2012, to April 30, 2012, inclusive, as Black April Memorial Week, and April 2012 as Vietnamese American month.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, April 30, 2012, marks the 37th anniversary of the
2 end of the Vietnam War and the start of the eventual exodus of
3 several million Vietnamese out of Vietnam after South Vietnam's
4 capital of Saigon fell to the Communists on April 30, 1975; and

5 WHEREAS, For many Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans who
6 were directly involved in the war and Vietnamese Americans who
7 have settled in the United States, the Vietnam War was a tragedy
8 full of great suffering and the loss of American, Vietnamese, and
9 Southeast Asian lives; and

10 WHEREAS, From 1961 to 1975, inclusive, approximately
11 250,000 members of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces and
12 58,000 members of the United States Armed Forces were killed
13 and 304,000 United States Armed Forces and more than 1,000,000
14 members of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces were wounded;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Out of the 2.59 million people who served in the
17 Vietnam War, one out of every 10 Americans who served in
18 Vietnam became a casualty of war; and

19 WHEREAS, After the Fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975, more
20 than 250,000 members of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces
21 were sent to reeducation camps where more than 20,000 died and
22 many spent up to 17 years in captivity before they were released;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, During the American evacuation of Saigon, the
25 first wave of Vietnamese refugees, 135,000 strong, mostly military
26 officers and their families, took temporary shelter through several
27 international refugee camps, and at Camp Pendleton in San Diego,
28 Fort Chaffee in Arkansas, and Indiantown Gap in Pennsylvania;
29 and

30 WHEREAS, Starting in 1977, and lasting through the
31 mid-1980s, a second wave of Vietnamese refugees comprised
32 mostly of "boat people" began leaving Vietnam; and

33 WHEREAS, Seeing no future under communism, nearly 800,000
34 boat people risked their lives in small, dangerous boats to travel
35 to resettlement camps in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia,
36 Thailand, and the Philippines before eventually being resettled in
37 the United States; and

38 WHEREAS, The Red Cross estimated that during that time, at
39 least 300,000 Vietnamese died on the high seas while trying to
40 escape communism; and

1 WHEREAS, After 1985, a third wave of Vietnamese refugees
2 came to the United States under the Orderly Department Program;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, In 1988, Congress passed the Operation
5 Homecoming Act, a program allowing approximately 80,000
6 Amerasian children (offspring of GI fathers and Vietnamese
7 mothers) to come to America; and

8 WHEREAS, By 1990, the fourth wave of Vietnamese refugees
9 began arriving in the United States under the Humanitarian
10 Operation, and today, more than 1.5 million Vietnamese Americans
11 identified their race as Vietnamese alone in the 2010 United States
12 Census; and

13 WHEREAS, Studies using census data show that foreign-born
14 Vietnamese entering the United States in the 1980s, 1990s, and
15 2000 to 2010, inclusive, have seen an increase in terms of English
16 proficiency, proportion of college graduates, the number of
17 owner-occupied housing, family median income, and
18 naturalization; and

19 WHEREAS, Over the years, Vietnamese immigrants have
20 overcome social, economic, and language barriers of unforeseen
21 magnitude to grow and become the most assimilated along civic
22 dimensions of any large group in America; and

23 WHEREAS, Through emphasis on intense study, Vietnamese
24 Americans have reached the pinnacles of American success in a
25 variety of fields, including business and entrepreneurship, science
26 and technology, space travel, medicine, the executive branch of
27 the United States government, politics, the United States military,
28 the United States judicial system, professional sports, and most
29 recently, cultural icon status in cooking, modeling, acting, and
30 comedy; and

31 WHEREAS, In order to serve their community and prosper in
32 America, Vietnamese Americans formed well-established and
33 thriving Vietnamese American commercial districts throughout
34 the United States and California, including enclaves in Oakland,
35 Orange County, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, and San
36 Jose; and

37 WHEREAS, More than 581,986 Vietnamese now live in
38 California, with the largest concentration of Vietnamese found
39 outside of Vietnam residing in Orange County, particularly in the

1 cities of Garden Grove, Santa Ana, Westminster, and Fountain
2 Valley; and

3 WHEREAS, San Jose has the largest concentration of
4 Vietnamese of any American city, with more than 100,000 people
5 or 10 percent of the city's population; and

6 WHEREAS, In 2007, the United States Census Bureau survey
7 of business owners reported that there are 68,812 Vietnamese
8 businesses in California with receipts of \$13.4 billion; and

9 WHEREAS, As we must teach our children and future
10 generations important lessons from the Vietnam War, including
11 how the plight of the Vietnamese refugees following the end of
12 the war serves as a powerful example of the values of freedom and
13 democracy; and

14 WHEREAS, Refugees and immigrants from the former Republic
15 of Vietnam who came to the United States and settled as free
16 Vietnamese Americans are honored and remembered for their
17 sacrifices for freedom and human rights and for their ongoing
18 contributions to our democratic society; and

19 WHEREAS, Executive Order S-14-06 was issued by Governor
20 Arnold Schwarzenegger and continued by Governor Edmund G.
21 Brown Jr. who also issued an official statement acknowledging
22 his support of the Vietnamese Freedom and Heritage flag. The
23 executive order honors the contributions of the Vietnamese
24 American community to the State of California and recognizes
25 their love for democracy, justice, and tolerance, upon which the
26 symbol of the Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom flag was
27 established; and

28 WHEREAS, The Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom flag,
29 yellow, with three horizontal red stripes, is the only symbol that
30 can unite most Vietnamese around the world and bring them
31 together under the banner that symbolizes the aspiration for
32 freedom and democracy in their homeland; and

33 WHEREAS, The Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom flag, dating
34 back to 1948, has been and will continue to be a symbol of
35 resilience, freedom, and democracy to many Vietnamese Americans
36 in California, and is also an important symbol in the history of
37 Vietnamese Americans; and

38 WHEREAS, Although also united in sorrow as they
39 commemorate April 30, 2012, as Black April, an occasion to reflect
40 on the sacrifices of the past, Vietnamese American communities

1 throughout California consider Black April a celebration of the
2 resilience of the Vietnamese people; now, therefore, be it
3 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
4 *thereof concurring*, That in recognition of the great tragedy and
5 suffering and lives lost during the Vietnam War era, the week of
6 April 23, 2012, to April 30, 2012, inclusive, shall be proclaimed
7 Black April Memorial Week, a special time for Californians to
8 remember the countless lives lost during the Vietnam War era,
9 and to hope for a more humane and just life for the people of
10 Vietnam; and be it further
11 *Resolved*, That the month of April 2012 be recognized as
12 Vietnamese American Month to honor a community that has added
13 so much personal, cultural, and economic value to the social fabric
14 of the great State of California, which embraces ethnic and cultural
15 diversity; and be it further
16 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
17 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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